DEMOCRATIC
GERMAN REPORT

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"LET'S TRY EDEN PLAN"

THIRD TIME LUCKY

1914

1918

Warsaw Conference Proposal

The plan proposed by British Foreign Minister Anthony Eden for free all-German elections should be taken as the basis for a renewed attempt to reunify Germany peacefully, delegates from most countries of East and West Europe, meeting in Warsaw at the beginning of February, proposed.

Fifty-one delegates, mainly members of Parliament from the People's Democracies, the Soviet Union, both parts of Germany, Denmark, Finland, France, Italy and other countries, met in Warsaw on February 6th on the initiative of the "European Conference for the Peaceful Solution of the German Question".

They agreed on a three point programme calling for immediate Four Power negotiations on the following basis:

1. Simultaneous withdrawal of all occupation troops from Germany. In this case the Soviet Union would also withdraw line-of-communication troops stationed in Poland.

2. "Re-unification of Germany by means of free controlled elections, held on the basis of an electoral law guaranteeing all democratic liberties, like that proposed by Sir Anthony Eden at the Berlin Conference".

3. "Respect for the obligations entered into in the Potsdam Agreement. The inviolability of the frontiers of a Germany outside all military coalitions would be guaranteed by the other European powers and the USA."

The delegates to the Warsaw meeting called for every support to be given to the movement against remilitarisation inside Germany.

(What is the Eden Plan? See next page)

1935

1945

1955

(From "Frankfurter Rundschau", West Germany)

MOLOTOV ON GERMANY

"Free Elections This Year"

(Extracts from the foreign policy speech delivered to the Supreme Soviet in Moscow on February 8th 1955 by Soviet Foreign Minister V. M. Molotov.)

Since the end of the Second World War the German problem has moved to a central position amongst the post-war problems in Europe...

The Soviet Union was and is in favour of the fulfillment of the main tasks laid down in the Yalta and Potsdam Agreements. It is not a question of certain paragraphs of these agreements—some of these paragraphs have been outdated by events.

The main problem remains, however: the problem of the reunification of Germany as a really peaceloving democratic state... This problem will remain on the agenda until it has been settled in accordance with the interests of ensuring peace in Europe, and in accordance with a proper respect for the national rebirth of a united and democratic Germany...

The danger presented by the ratification of the Paris Agreements is that these agreements are not intended to secure peace but to prepare for war... The ratification of the Paris Agreements would also be a serious blow to the national interests of the German people.

If the Paris Agreements are ratified they will be the main obstacle to the solution of the German problem. This would make the restoration of German unity impossible for a long period of time.

When West Germany has been remilitarised and converted into a militarist state this will make impossible the unification of this part of Germany with the eastern part, the peaceloving German Democratic Republic...

The rejection of the Paris Agreements and an agreement between the Four Powers would make it possible to hold all-German free elections this year with the aim of restoring German unity on a peaceful and democratic basis. That is the meaning of the statement issued on January 15th by the Soviet Government on the German question.

The attitude of the Soviet Government to the Paris Agreements is absolutely clear, and leaves no room for misunderstanding...

When remilitarised West Germany, in accordance with the Paris Agreements, enters the North Atlantic Block and the Western European Military Union together with France, Britain, Italy and various other states, there will be a new situation in Europe which will greatly reinforce the danger of a new war.

The Soviet Union, and the People's Democracies will be forced to take this into account...

In view of this new situation in Europe the Soviet Union and the other peaceloving states against which the Paris Agreements are directed will not be able to be inactive. They will have to take the necessary measures to further strengthen their security and to guarantee peace in Europe...

These measures will include the preparation of the conclusion of a treaty of friendship, cooperation and mutual aid between the eight states which participated in the Moscow Conference (USSR, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Rumania, Bulgaria, Albania and the German Democratic Republic). In order to lose no time the necessary consultations are already being held...

The measures which we shall have to take in the case of the formation of a West European military grouping with the participation of remilitarised West Germany will include the creation of a unified military command of the eight countries named...

WHAT IS EDEN PLAN?

Here is the text of the Eden Plan for All-German elections, submitted to the Four Power Conference in Berlin on January 29th 1954:

Free and secret elections should be held throughout Germany including Berlin at the earliest possible date. These elections must be held in conditions of genuine freedom. Safeguards must be agreed to assure this freedom before, after and during the elections. The elections must also be supervised in such a manner as to make sure that these safeguards are observed and that the elections are properly conducted.

(a) The electoral law

The electoral law should be prepared by the Four Occupying Powers, taking into consideration the electoral laws already drafted for this purpose by the Federal Bundestag and the Soviet Zone Volkskammer. When approved, it should be promulgated throughout Germany by the Four Powers. Elections should take place as soon as possible thereafter.

(b) Guarantees for free elections.

The draft electoral law must contain provisions which will guarantee the genuine freedom of the elections. These include, amongst others:

Freedom of movement throughout Germany.

Freedom of presentation of candidates.

Immunity of candidates.

Freedom from arbitrary arrest or victimisation.

Freedom of association and political meetings.

Freedom of expression for all.

Freedom of the press, radio and television and free circulation of newspapers, periodicals, etc.

Secrecy of the vote.

Security of polling stations and ballot boxes.

(c) Supervision of the elections.

Supervision should be carried out by a supervisory commission throughout the whole of Germany. There should be a central body with subordinate bodies at Land and local levels. All votes should be counted and verified at local headquarters in the presence of the supervisory commission.

(i) Composition of the Supervisory Commission: The commission should be composed of representatives of the Four Powers, with or without the participation of neutrals.

(ii) Organisation of the Commission: The commission should work on a committee basis. Its decisions should be taken by majority vote.

(iii) Functions and powers of the Commission: The principal task of the commission will be to ensure that the elections take place in genuine freedom and in strict conformity with the provisions of the electoral law.

1945 WARNING FOR 1955

"The Germans will try to drive a wedge between Britain and Russia".

This was the warning given in an official British Government booklet to British troops driving into Germany in January 1945. Here are some passages from the text of the warning:

"The history of these last years must not be repeated. The purpose of the British Commonwealth and its allies and all the forces which represent them, is not vengeance against the Germans.

"It is to make sure that they will never again have a chance to submerge Europe and the world in blood. Remember, for as long as you are in Germany, that you would not be there at all if German crimes had not made this war inevitable.

"(After 1918) behind the scenes, the real power still remained in the hands of the generals, the great industrialists and landowners and the professional civil servants. They waited and watched for a chance to assert themselves.

"Be on your guard.

"We were taken in by them after the last war; many of us believed their talk about disarmament and the sincerity of their desire for peace. And so we let ourselves in for this war, which has been a good deal bigger than the last.

"There are signs that the German leaders are already making plans for a third world war. That must be prevented at all costs.

"The Soviet citizen, Hitler said, is less than a human being, so no treatment can be too cruel for him. The 'Bolsheviks' were bracketed with the Jews as Enemy of Mankind No. 1.

"When the Red Army began its advance, Hitler redoubled this propaganda. He hoped to frighten his troops and the civilians at home into resisting to the death. And to some extent he succeeded.

"Ever since the Germans invaded Russia in 1941, their propaganda has been spreading baseless scares about the 'Bolshevik menace'. The aim was perfectly clear — it was to drive a wedge between us and our Russian ally.

„Remember this if the Germans try to spread stories against the Red Army."

The warning given in 1945 has become doubly important today. In West Germany the power has remained in the hands of the generals, the great industrialists and the landowners.

So be on your guard.

Britain Should Support New Talks

By Emrys Hughes, British Labour M. P.

It is to be hoped that the Government, and if the Government is not prepared to do it, the Labour Party Front Bench, will strongly support the suggestion that the Governments of the United States, France and the United Kingdom should enter into negotiations with the Soviet Union on the proposals for a settlement of the German problem contained in the Soviet Note to the West of January 15th 1955 (Mr Hughes is here referring to the Soviet Declaration of that date calling for all-German elections, under international control if necessary, ed.).

This suggestion has been strongly supported by the Social Democratic Party of Germany, and Herr Ollenhauer, its leader, has strongly urged Dr. Adenauer to take the same line. Herr Ollenhauer has also urged that the three governments should take this action before the final ratification of the Paris Treaty.

I do not know what possible reason can be advanced against this line or why a British Government should turn it down.

For, it must be remembered, the Soviet Government has shown itself prepared to compromise and to agree to what it has never agreed to before, free elections in all four zones of Germany and in Berlin, and as this issue of free elections has always been one of the main stumbling blocks from the British point of view, we certainly should now be prepared at least to meet the Russians to find out what they mean.

From the German point of view the policy that Herr Ollenhauer and the German Socialists are now advocating it the only sensible and rational one, for it offers a reasonable hope that West Germany and East Germany can be re-united and foreign soldiers of all nations removed from German soil.

If the Western allies stubbornly turn down this conference now they must be held responsible for the continuation of a divided Germany, and no intelligent or far-seeing German can want this.

Germans — whether they live in the East or the West — all fervently hope for the ending of the Russian occupation and for the ending of American and French occupation of their country too.

But if the Paris Treaty is ratified and the Russians, fearful of the prospect of the revival of aggressive German militarism, dig in their heels in the East, then Germans will be organised against each other, brother against brother. The prospect of another European War, which will inevitably be fought, at least in its preliminary stages, on German soil, will be brought nearer . . .

The danger to ourselves as the result of German rearmament and the tension it may bring to Britain would be infinitely greater than it is now.

That is why we should urge upon the Government to negotiate on the basis of the new Russian offer of January 15th, and to take the initiative now.

(From "Peace News", London, January 29th 1955)

"Armed robbery? Hell no! I'm just negotiating from strength"

("Deutsche Volkszeitung" West Germany)

WEST GERMAN RESISTANCE GROWS

The Social Democratic Party is already conducting the collection of signatures to the manifesto in three specimen West German constituencies. Results of the signature collection will be announced before the West German Parliament debates final ratification of the Paris Agreements on February 24th.

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The Bavarian Trade Union Federation has been forced to abandon its original plan to organise a plebiscite against the Paris Agreements, owing to "constitutional difficulties", it was announced on February 10th. Instead the union will organise the collection of signatures to the "Frankfurt Manifesto" in which leading Socialists and church dignitaries announced their opposition to West German rearmament.

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In West Berlin 1500 persons attended a mass meeting organised by various peace groups including the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom and the No-Conscription Fellowship. It was unanimously decided to go ahead in West Berlin with collection of signatures to the "Frankfurt Manifesto".

•

The provincial parliament of Bremen voted against the remilitarisation of West Germany on February 9th. Social Democratic and Communist members joined in voting against the Paris Agreements, and urging the West German parliament to take action for German reunification.

•

The Krefeld district of the West German trade union congress has recommended all factory workers in the district to stage a token strike against remilitarisation on February 24th, when the West German Parliament is scheduled to discuss the Paris Agreements.

•

One thousand workers of the Brackwede Steel Factory near Bielefeld have called on the central board of the metalworkers' union to declare a general strike to prevent the ratification of the Paris Agreements.

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Berlin W 8,
Germany.

Adenauer Threatens Unions

West German Chancellor Adenauer threatened the Social Democratic Party and the West German trade unions on February 6th that he would be forced to "take action" against them if they organised non-parliamentary action against the ratification of the Paris Agreements.

Chancellor Adenauer uttered his threat in an address to the party committee of the Christian Democratic Union in which he stated:

"The Social Democrats are organising a plebiscite against the Paris Agreements. This plebiscite is being carried on in public, and therefore it is not free (applause). A really democratic party would not do a thing like this. In a democracy the decision is up to parliament, and parliament has to take the decision without any pressure from outside.

"I must express my serious concern at the fact that the Social Democratic Party is taking a dangerous path. We, the members of the Christian Democratic Union and the coalition parties will not agree to this. We are determined to take action to ensure that parliament retains the right to decide."

SS Guard to Die

SS Concentration Camp guard Karl Theiner was sentenced to death on February 4th by an East Berlin court after he had been found guilty of murdering hundreds of concentration camp inmates in the camps at Mauthausen and Sachsenhausen.

55 SS "Old Comrades" Associations in West Germany

Veterans of Himmler's SS are today organised in 55 different "Old Comrades' Associations" in West Germany, according to a listing published in the February 1955 issue of "Wiking-Ruf", the magazine of SS veterans. The associations include "SS Panzer Corps Leibstandarte Adolf Hitler", and the "SS Division Das Reich". Regular meetings of members of these groups are held in 159 West German towns, the magazine boasted.

Former SS General Paul Hausser, writing in the same issue of the magazine, urged SS veterans not to use their old SS slogans "Our Honour is Obedience" and "The proud deeds of our fallen will live for ever" too often in public at the present time. "Of course we shall continue to live up to these slogans, but we do not need to blurt them out all the time" General Hausser stated.

THE NOBLES OF DETROIT

By John Peet

The Noble family of Detroit, USA, came into the news in January this year when John H. Noble was released from a Soviet prison and returned to the United States.

American and other western papers were full of sob stories about the "ordeal" undergone by John H. Noble and his father Charles A. Noble, who had been released two years earlier.

Curiously enough, little or nothing was said by these papers about how the two Nobles came to be serving prison sentences in the Soviet Union. Typical was the short account given by the American news agency Associated Press on January 2nd: "The elder Mr. Noble is a former prisoner of the Russians. The father and son were trapped in Germany by the war. The elder Mr. Noble was the owner of a camera factory in Germany." And that is all.

But the true story is very interesting. Here are some of the main details:

"Charles Noble" was born under the name Karl Spannknoefel in a little town near Magdeburg, Germany. In 1920 he emigrated to the United States, was naturalised there, and changed his name.

He appears to have come from a family which had close connections with the nazis — a brother of his, also named Spannknoefel, was deported from the United States in 1934 because he had been acting as a nazi propagandist.

In 1938, one year before the outbreak of war, Mr. Noble returned to Germany, and settled down at Dresden, where he purchased, very cheaply, a camera factory at Niedersedlitz which had been "aryanised" by the nazis. Such "aryanised" property was generally sold to businessmen who gave their full support to Hitler.

When nazi Germany declared war on the United States in December 1941, all American citizens living in Germany were interned — all of them except firm and trusted nazi supporters. Mr. Noble was not only not interned, but was allowed to go on running his camera factory, in which he manufactured military equipment for the Luftwaffe.

He appears to have done very well, financially, for he soon purchased the "Villa San Remo", an extremely ugly but palatial 20-room residence on a hill overlooking Dresden.

Some time during the war, probably when he had decided that nazi Germany was bound to be defeated, Mr. Noble got into touch with the United States intelligence service, and offered to supply information. In this manner he hoped to provide himself with an alibi after Hitler's defeat.

The offer was accepted, and the Nobles installed a radio transmitter in the attic of their villa. **They were undergoing no risk, for it has now been proved that the nazi authorities were kept informed of this step, and gave their approval.**

This has been shown from documents discovered in nazi party headquarters in Dresden after the end of the war.

From these documents it is clear that Mr. Noble had reliable advance information about the devastating air raid planned on Dresden on February 13th 1945, and that he passed this information on to Gauleiter Mutschmann, highest nazi official in the city, 24 hours before the attack.

Mutschmann made no attempt to evacuate the population, but instead moved his own valuable furniture and his family out of the threatened city to Grillenburg castle, some distance away. And from Grillenburg Castle, at 4 o'clock on the morning of February 14th, Gauleiter Mutschmann telephoned with his chief, Josef Goebbels in Berlin, to give a first report on the raid, in which some 35,000 people had been killed.

A shorthand note was made of this telephone conversation by Mutschmann's secretary, and this shorthand note shows that Goebbels told Mutschmann: "You must not lose contact with Noble . . . this man is worth millions."

When, a few weeks later, the Soviet Army occupied Dresden, two big American flags were flying from the windows of the "Villa San Remo", flying from flag-posts which only a few days before had sported the swastika banner.

And upstairs in the attic sat Mr. Noble, tapping out a code message for the U. S. intelligence service on his secret transmitter. A few weeks later Soviet counter-espionage officers caught him and his son red-handed collecting and passing on military intelligence information about the Soviet forces. They were arrested, tried, and sentenced to long terms of imprisonment.

Now they have been released, and have returned to live in Detroit.

Footnote: The villa San Remo, with a fine view over Dresden, where reconstruction work is in full swing, is today used as a club house by the doctors, writers and musicians of Dresden. The spy radio has long been taken away, but Mr. Noble's two American flags are still lying rolled up in the attic.

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Documents of the Day:

"IZVESTIA" ON GERMAN PROBLEM

From "Izvestia", Moscow, February 1st 1955

The Soviet Government's declaration of January 15th on the German question brought to the fore the most urgent task in the settlement of the German problem — a problem which is of the greatest importance for the strengthening of peace in Europe. This task is the achievement of German unity on a peaceful and democratic basis.

The Soviet Government declared that, for the solution of this task, negotiations between the U.S.A., Great Britain, France and the Soviet Union are necessary, in order to restore German unity through all-German free elections during 1955. This declaration of the Soviet Government has found widespread support in the most varied strata of society in both East and West Germany. Many well-known functionaries of parties and social organisations, as well as young people, workers and peasants in West Germany are actively demanding the rejection of the Paris Agreements, which aim at the restoration of German militarism. They stress that the ratification of the Paris Agreements is incompatible with the restoration of Germany as a united, peace-loving state. They insist upon negotiations between the four Great Powers on the question of the national reunification of German.

The supporters of the re-establishment of the Wehrmacht and of the division of Germany, in their efforts to draw West Germany into military groupings, try to deceive the public by claiming that the ratification of the Paris Agreements would not hinder negotiations on the German question, but would actually assist them.

In this connection the Chancellor of the German Federal Republic, Adenauer, stated recently in a radio speech: "Anyone who believes that the Federal Republic can at the present stage, that is when she is occupied, unfree and powerless, conduct successful negotiations with the Soviet Union on the reunification of Germany in peace and freedom, has no insight into reality in politics".

The resignation with which Adenauer speaks of negotiations on the question of the restoration of German unity is striking. This can clearly be explained by the fact that Adenauer links up all his speculations and hopes with a cause so devoid of prospects for the German people as the ratification and carrying out of the Paris Agreements, which foresee the remilitarisation of West Germany and its incorporation in military groupings under the aegis of aggressive circles in the U.S.A.

In this case Adenauer reflects the attitude of those who openly disbelieve in a relaxation of international tension and to whom such a relaxation is obviously unwelcome. Adenauer will, however, have miscalculated if he does not change his standpoint. His present attitude can only be of advantage to those who oppose the restoration of German unity and who try under various pretexts to hold aloof from the solution of this task.

It cannot be seriously denied that at present the reunification of Germany depends first and foremost on the Germans themselves and upon the attitude of the German people. It is clearly understandable that for the solution of the task of restoring German unity it is necessary for both parts of Germany — the eastern and the western part — to find a common mode of expression, and for the Four Powers — France, Great Britain, the U.S.A. and the Soviet Union — to begin negotiations on the removal of the division of Germany, in the interests of achieving a united, peace-loving and democratic Germany.

In the event of the ratification of the Paris Agreements, however, West Germany would be transformed into a militarist state and this would make the reunification of the western and eastern parts of Germany impossible. Negotiations between the Four Powers on this question after the ratification of the Paris Agreements would therefore be impossible and senseless.

It follows that Adenauer's present attitude can in no way serve the interests of the national restoration of Germany or the interests of strengthening peace in Europe. This policy serves only those who are working for the preparation and provocation of a new war, the terrible consequences of which no-one should under-estimate.

In its declaration of January 15th 1955 the Soviet Government pointed out that she maintained good relations with the German Democratic Republic and that she is also prepared to normalise relations between the USSR and the German Federal Republic. In this connection the Soviet Government emphasised that the normalisation of relations between the Soviet Union and the German Federal Republic would under present conditions contribute to better mutual understanding and to a search for more successful ways of solving the task of the restoration of German unity.

Efforts are being made in Bonn to distort this clear statement of the Soviet Government by expressing doubts about the main aim of the statement — i. e. to end the division of Germany and give the German people the chance to unite in a unified, democratic and peace-loving state. In this connection Adenauer declared in the same speech that the Soviet Union allegedly "leaves it open when and in what way German unity shall be achieved". He also declared: "We shall never recognise the existence of two German states".

It is clear to all unprejudiced persons that Adenauer had no grounds for making such statements in contradiction to the facts. In fact the Soviet Union alone of the Four Powers stands firm and steady for the quickest possible restoration of German unity and shows by her proposals her readiness to enter immediately into negotiations on the carrying out of all-German free elections, the way to overcome the division of Germany. In the meantime, however much Adenauer talks of the non-recognition of two German states, these states are already actually in existence, and the present attitude of the Adenauer government can only result in prolonging indefinitely the condition of division in Germany.

In order to contribute to a quicker solution of the question of carrying out all-German elections, the Soviet government considers it possible, in the event of agreement by the government of the German Democratic Republic and of the German Federal Republic, to reach agreement on the setting up of a suitable international supervision over the carrying out of all-German elections. It must be stated that the Soviet Government, as heretofore, sees no necessity for the setting up of an international supervision over the carrying out of all-German elections, since it

regards all-German elections as an internal affair of the German people themselves, who have sufficient parliamentary traditions to master this task without any outside help. However, in deference to the repeatedly expressed wishes of the other three Powers, and taking into consideration the fact that these wishes are supported by the government of the German Federal Republic, the Soviet Union has declared itself in agreement with the establishment of an international control.

The fact remains to be noted that Adenauer expresses himself against negotiations on the question of restoring German unity. As is known, Social Democratic Party Chairman Ollenhauer declared that this is an "impermissible subterfuge" of Adenauer's. It is clear that this is actually the case.

The exchange of statements between the government of the Soviet Union and the government of the German Federal Republic has up till now produced no satisfactory results. It is therefore the task of all those who really seek a settlement of the German question to give detailed and accurate explanations to the German public about the proposals of the Soviet Union aiming at the restoration of the unity of Germany as a peace-loving and democratic state.

The decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Soviet Union "On the Ending of the State of War between the Soviet Union and Germany" must also contribute to normalising relations between the Soviet Union and the German Federal Republic.

As is known from the press, Adenauer maintained in his radio speech that the Soviet Union allegedly "does not allow free elections" in Germany, since she allegedly proposes that, in the all-German elections on all-German territory, electoral law should be used which "decisively" corresponds to the electoral law of the German Democratic Republic.

The declaration of the Soviet Government of January 15th was published in full in the German democratic press, and all those who have read it can convince themselves that these statements of Adenauer's are not in accordance with the facts.

The statement of the Soviet Government on this point was in fact as follows: "In these (all-German) elections the democratic rights of German citizens must be assured. The electoral law to be worked out for this election, taking into consideration the electoral laws of the German Democratic Republic and of the German Federal Republic, must guarantee freedom of expression to all electors and freedom of election campaigning to all democratic parties and organisations in all Germany, as well as freedom to nominate candidates and issue election lists".

To state in the face of these facts, that the Soviet Union allegedly will not allow free all-German elections, is to state an obvious untruth. In addition, it must also be remembered that the proposal of the Soviet Government for the preparation of an all-German electoral law taking into consideration the electoral laws of the German Democratic Republic and of the German Federal Republic coincides with the proposal on the same subject by the British Government, put forward by Eden at the Berlin Conference, which was supported by the Governments of the U.S.A. and France, as well as by the government of the German Federal Republic.

On the other hand, Chancellor Adenauer's uneasiness is understandable. Real freedom in elections in the whole of Germany would in no way guarantee a majority of votes for the Adenauer government in an all-German parliament. This is also understandable, since it is the Adenauer government which has shown so much obstinacy in hindering negotiations on the restoration of German unity.

It should finally be emphasised that the assertion spread in certain political circles in Bonn, that the Soviet Union makes the reunification of Germany dependent upon certain conditions, is absolutely groundless. It is known that the Soviet Union makes no such conditions, other than that the united Germany should be a peace-loving, democratic state and should enter no military blocs which are directed against the Soviet Union or against any other state in the West or in the East.

It is not difficult to understand that this condition corresponds both to the cause of strengthening the peace of Europe and to the interests of the German people themselves.

The widespread response which the declaration of the Soviet Union of January 15th on the German question has called forth in the whole of Germany and far beyond its frontiers is proof that the tasks set forth by this declaration for the restoration of German unity on a peaceful and democratic basis correspond to the urgent needs of the peoples of Europe and, first and foremost, of the German people themselves.

The preservation of peace and security in Europe demand that the interested Powers reach agreement on this question and that the Paris Agreements be emphatically rejected, as agreements which lead to the rebirth of German militarism and the devision of Germany for an indefinite length of time, and conjure up a threat to the peace of Europe.

EAST GERMAN SHORTS

Twenty-eight extra trains and six special railway cars will be added to the service from West Germany to deal with traffic to the Leipzig Spring Fair at the end of February 1955.

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French film actors Anne Vernon and Roland Alexandre have arrived in East Berlin to play in the film "The Girl from Scuderi", based on E. T. A. Hoffmann's story, being made jointly by the Swedish Pandora Company and the East German DEFA film company.

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A China section of the Far East department in the Berlin State Museum is being built up again with the help of two Chinese experts who arrived in Berlin from Peking on January 14th.

The Leipzig Kammerspiele theatre has added "Lady Windermere's Fan", by Oscar Wilde, to its repertoire.

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The inhabitants of Karl Marx Stadt (formerly Chemnitz) spent 480,000 voluntary hours of work and contributed 161,000 marks on rubble clearance and rebuilding in 1954.

290,280 hours of voluntary work and 236,768 marks were spent by the people of Rostock on rubble clearance and building in Rostock during 1954.

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9 million tons of rubble have been cleared in central Berlin during the last ten years. There remain 1.8 million tons to be cleared by the end of 1957.

BERLIN NOTEBOOK

By John Peet

There was an interesting exchange in the British House of Commons on January 31st. Here is the report from the "Times", London, of February 1st:

Mr. Arthur Lewis (Labour, West Ham, North) asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he was aware that many of the officers and advisers responsible for the organisation of the new German Army proposed in the Paris Agreements had Nazi and anti-democratic backgrounds; whether he would make it a condition of ratification of the agreements that Lieutenant General Count Gerhard Schwerin, formerly a member of the planning department of the Nazi General Staff, Colonel Adolf von Kielmannsegg, General Hans Speidel, General Maximilian von Edelsheim, Major-General Rudolf von Gersdorf, General Wend von Wietersheim, Major-General Smilo von Luettwitz, General Ludwig Cruewell, Lieutenant Adolf Heusinger and Colonel Gerhard Panitzki (three of the names were misspelled in the original report, but have been corrected here, ed.) all of whom had been designated for service with the army, should be barred from holding any office because of their Nazi background.

Mr. Nutting (parliamentary Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs) — The answer to both parts of the question is "No".

"Inaccurate Copy"

He stated in a further reply that when the London and Paris Agreements came into force the appointment of senior officers for the future German armed forces would be a matter for the Federal German Government. In the list of names, which Mr. Lewis had inaccurately copied from a Communist publication — the German Democratic Report — Colonel Kielmannsegg had been arrested in 1944 for complicity in the plot against Hitler, General Speidel had been arrested after the 1944 plot, Major-General Gersdorff had been an early member of an active and resolute group of resistants, and General Heusinger had been arrested on suspicion in 1944.

Mr. Lewis asked if it was in order for the Minister to make charges he could in no way substantiate. He had copied the details from the New York Times.

The Speaker said he had understood Mr. Nutting to say that Mr. Lewis had copied them from some Communist paper. If that was not so, and the Minister was inaccurate, he should withdraw the suggestion.

Mr. Nutting said that if Mr. Lewis assured him he had not copied the details from the Communist paper, he naturally accepted the explanation, and withdrew his remark.

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F. O. Reads REPORT

It is interesting to note that GERMAN REPORT is apparently studied by the British Foreign Office — I hope they learn something useful. But since Mr. Nutting charged Mr. Lewis with "inaccurately copying" the list of names from this paper (the inaccuracies were three unimportant spelling mistakes), I should perhaps draw his attention to the fact that he in turn inaccurately quoted the full name of this paper — it is called "Democratic German Report", and not "German Democratic Report".

But the question and answer reveal something more important. The first part of Mr. Lewis's question was whether the British Foreign Secretary was aware that many of the officers of the new West German Wehrmacht had nazi backgrounds: and the astounding answer from the government representative was that he was not aware of this. If he says he does not know this, then he is either a fool or a prevaricator.

If he wants to find out about their nazi background, he should look up the copy of GERMAN REPORT dated January 7th 1955, which gives full details (I shall be pleased to send a copy of this issue to him, or to any other reader on request). But it should be noted that he does not deny that these old nazis are designated to occupy high posts in the new West German Wehrmacht.

In the second part of his reply, the Under Secretary made the claim that some of the generals named had taken part in the plot against Hitler in 1944: apparently in his eyes this made them fine democrats. In fact, of course, the generals participating in the bomb-plot against Hitler opposed him because they thought he was not running the war satisfactorily; they had all given him their full and unconditional support in overrunning Europe and murdering millions of men, women and children so long as he was successful.

If plotting against Hitler is taken as a yard-stick of anti-fascism, then both Himmler and Goering were obviously fine anti-fascists, since both of them plotted against him in the closing days of the war. It may be worth recalling these episodes. Himmler, SS Chief, acting behind Hitler's back, approached the western allies on April 24th 1945 with an offer to arrange German surrender to the western allies only. This offer was rejected. (See official statement issued by the British Government on April 28th, 1945).

At the same time, Field Marshal Goering had attempted to take over the leadership of Germany from Hitler, and was arrested on Hitler's orders on April 24th by SS troops. (See "Keesing's Contemporary Archives", page 7181)

It is too bad that both Himmler and Goering are dead. Otherwise Mr. Nutting could be commending them for posts in the new West German Wehrmacht.

Eden's "Welcome"

While we are on the question of the British Parliament it is interesting to see what Foreign Secretary Sir Anthony Eden has to say about Heinz Heinrich von Herwarth, the new West German ambassador in London. Asked about this appointment on February 7th, Sir Anthony said: "I see no reason to do other than welcome this appointment."

Who is Ambassador Herwarth? Here is what the London "Times" had to say about him on January 8th 1955:

"Herr von Herwarth served at the German Embassy in Moscow from 1931 to 1939 ... Herr von Herwarth served through the war as liaison officer of the German Foreign Ministry with the armed forces, with the army rank of captain."

So Sir Anthony Eden "welcomes" the appointment of a man who, throughout the entire nazi period, served Hitler in a responsible political post. Comment is unnecessary.

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